

The VOICE



State Teachers College

Farmville, Virginia

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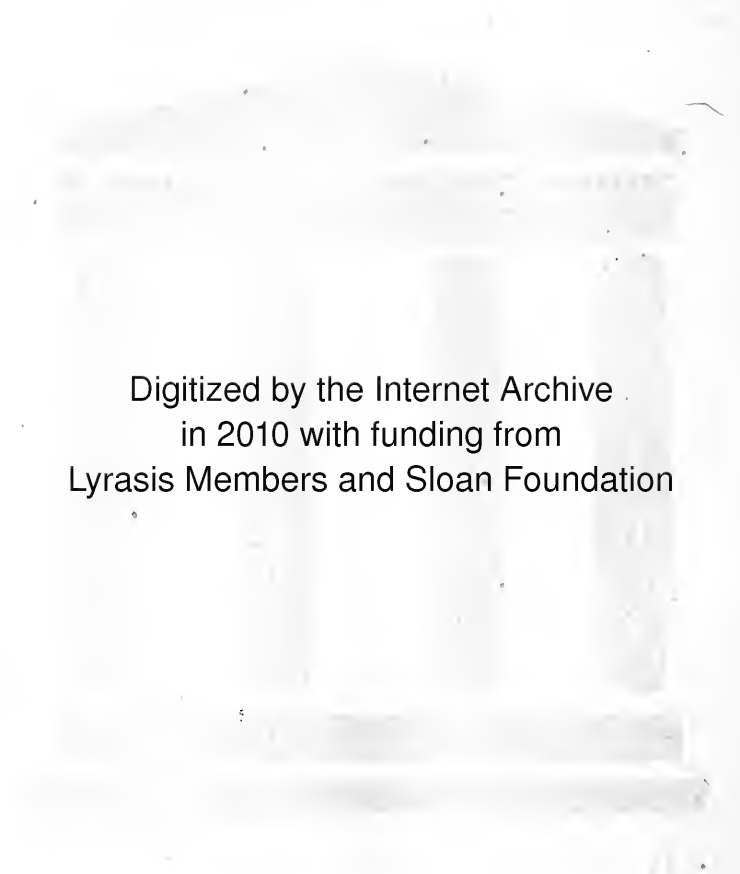
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William Henry Ruffner

HE first legislature convening in Virginia after the close of the war Between the States was faced by the problem of legislation regarding education. A system of public schools was established, but as they struggled toward efficiency, the need for specially trained teachers became evident. To meet this need, the legislature passed, at its regular session in March, 1884, an act establishing a normal school. Through the efforts of Dr. W. H. Ruffner, Dr. James Nelson, then pastor of the Baptist Church, and W. H. H. Thackstone, at that time mayor of the town, Farmville offered the State a building formerly used as a girls' school.

At the first meeting of the board of the newly established normal school, Dr. Ruffner was unanimously chosen president. The date for opening was set as October 30, 1884, although, in the words of Dr. Ruffner, all they had was "a principal, an appropriation, a rough scheme and an old academy building—not a teacher—nor a book, nor a piece of apparatus or furniture."

Familiar, however, as he was with the needs along this line, the board allowed him much freedom in the selection and organization of his faculty. His past experience as the first Superintendent of Public Instruction in Virginia no doubt guided him, and the first year of the administration proved very successful.

To Dr. Ruffner, our first president, the State Teachers College owes much, for it was he who started it on its successful career. "He needs no eulogies. His volume is undissolubly linked with the State Normal Schools and the public school system of Virginia. With two such splendid monuments, the name of William Henry Ruffner can not die."

Anne Carrington Stump, '30

Our First President

He builded strong,
He builded true,
He builded well
For me—for you.
For all the many thousands who
Have lingered here.
We honor him,
We laud his name,
Our pioneer.
As such, his fame
With grateful hearts we would proclaim
So all may hear.

Our Alma Mater,
Full of grace,
With springing step
And smiling face,
Now marches on to take her place
Among the great;
But she would not
Forget her days
Of childhood, nor
Withhold her praise
Of him who guided through those days
Her pleasant fate.

Jennie M. Tabb.

Joyce Randolph, Freshman

By Alice St. Ables Harrison, '32

PRELUDE

I shall never forget that evening . . .

It was almost seven o'clock. Joy and I were lying on a moss-bank near the lake watching the sun drop behind the fringe of green-black trees on the hill. We were wondering what there would be for supper,—at least I was; Joy was thinking up a poem. It was about a little girl named Sky, who had starry eyes, and whose hair was a little gold sun-set cloud. She was going to a party in a lovely blue dress. Her sash was made of a long rifted cloud which the sun had dyed to a warm pink for her, and to have it tied, Sky ran to her nurse, Kind, who arranged the soft, rosy ribbon in festive knots. I liked this part of the poem, but the rest of it was very sad; a Black Night stole the little girl away, and her nurse moaned for her all through the darkness; the clouds wept, and the stars hid their faces in sorrow.

That was the evening the China-Lady,—she of the amber eyes and tea-rose complexion,—told us how God made people. She said that in His workshop there were rows and rows of little cut-glass and silver vases on the gleaming shelves. Each one contained a different fluid, clear and colorful. Each one was carefully labeled with such words as "Beauty," "Genius," "Love," and many others. Whenever God made a person He always mixed a few drops from one of His bottles in with the common, earthy materials, and those small fluid globules made the soul of the new being. "But when God made Joy," the China-Lady told us, "He had only a tiny bit left in each one of His vials, so He poured them all in. Then from a secret drawer He drew forth a crystal phial filled with sparkling, translucent water, and emptied it entirely into the rest. In this last vase was contained the art of living life to its utmost, of drinking it raw and deep, of knowing the heaviest pains, the highest joy."

She kissed me, and looked long into Joy's eyes. Then she went away into the forest, and we never saw her again.

That was when we were seven . . .

Joyce Randolph, Freshman

Y position, to say the least, is peculiar. I am a novel on college life, which is to be a perfect example of its kind, and "sans peur et sans reproche" (a French expression that doesn't fit particularly well at this juncture) and cannot begin in the usual and customary way with a lengthy description of the beauties of the campus, or of the delightful appearance of its inhabitants, for at the memorable time when my story begins, there was nothing to be seen!

It was night. A thousand girls had been taken prisoners during the day (at least, that was the way they felt about it just then), and except for a few stray lights hither and yon, which only emphasized the blackness, the circumambient atmosphere presented a very India-inkish appearance. But evidently there was sufficient light for the rain and wind to discover the location of the place; and because of the many outings they had spoiled for the girls during the summer, they penitently betook themselves, with misdirected ardor in the interest of the captured ones, to besiege the school, in all probability forgetting the fact that people of the feminine gender are deathly afraid of bombardments when they occur in their vicinity. And so the rain converted itself into a thousand war-horses which raced through the black ether under the guidance of the reckless wind, who lashed them on ruthlessly. They trotted on the roof of the building; they galloped; in occasional mad bursts they rushed wildly away;—and ever mingled with their tumult could be heard, in minor undertone, the persistent rattle of sleet.

Who but God could know what storms and tempests there were warring within the quiet college, as well as without,—not so noticeable, perhaps, but every bit as intense? Of course, some stolid beings slept,—too phleg-

matic to have any feelings one way or the other,—but for most of them it was a sleepless, painful night. How they huddled in disconsolate little heaps under the bed-clothes, wept copiously, longed for their mothers, and shivered at each new silver curtain of rain that hung itself momentarily from their windows!

With characteristic determination, Joy had decided when she slipped into bed that night, that nothing on earth should induce her to think of home. It was a habit of hers to always review the events of the day before going to sleep, “but this time,” she murmured to herself, “I’ll have to leave that part of it out; it hurt so much!” She swallowed hard, rapidly dashed the tears from her eyes, and steered her away to a safer and more cheerful subject. She finally centered on her room-mate as the ideal point upon which to begin her meditations.

It was early in the afternoon that Joy had entered her room expecting to find it unoccupied, for as yet her room-mate had not arrived. All she knew of her was her name, Lilly White, but she was sure that she would be just like it,—tall, slender, with fair skin, and hair of a soft golden pallor. She was at first astonished, and then overwhelmed (inwardly, of course) at the person who confronted her gaze. Lilly, for Lilly it was, (she had her feet planted on the floor in a way that seemed to show with utter finality that there was no mistake about it), was positively elephantine; no other word can express it. She had a heavy plaid coat hanging limply over one arm; across the front of her maroon-colored hat struggled a scraggy waterfall of purple bloom; her pink dress was voluminous, even for her, and a wide white ruffle, evidently an unhappy afterthought of its maker, was feather-stitched around the bottom in brilliant rose. To complete the picture, Lilly’s shoes were of the ferry-boat type in

respect to size, discolored by mud and rain, and the pointed toes turned up "like little elf shoes," Joy thought, trying to make the best of them. A few wisps of hair, of a shade verging upon orange, hung disconcertingly straight from beneath her hat; and from her pale blue eyes, across her huge fat, freckled cheeks, two immense tears were slowly rolling their way downward.

Joy felt a slight stiffening of her backbone, and knew that she was "rising to meet the occasion." Her heart went out in sympathy to the girl as soon as she had stifled her disappointment, and she cordially grasped Lilly's large, red hand. (Joy often said,—she got a spanking for announcing the fact when she was little,—that in one way, she was like God;—she was "no respecter of persons." To her, everyone was an individual with an individual's thoughts and feelings, fashioned by the same God, and loved by Him. She believed steadfastly and ardently in that little spark of divinity which God has put of Himself into all His human creatures, and she took a quaint and joyous delight in discovering this divine fire in everyone, and in helping it to flame brighter.

Whenever anyone raised an objection to a person on the grounds that she was "funny", Joy was given to quote whimsically: "All the world is queer save me and thee, and sometimes methinks thou art a little queer!" . . .

At this juncture in her thoughts, Joy was aroused by a curious noise coming from the other side of the room where Lilly was supposed to be sleeping. It sounded like little snorts, and they were interspersed with heavy sighs, shaken sobs, and the sound of creaking bed-springs.

Joy was annoyed, and frowned sternly in the dark. It was her private opinion that anyone as big as Lilly should certainly be able to control her feelings, especially when their utterance would probably be objectionable to another person. Sniffing was so intensely aggravating!

She could visualize the large, crocodile tears slowly emanating from the doleful, faded-blue eyes, and tried to steel her heart against Lilly's woe on the grounds that she was purely selfish in her grief, and that she had no business being so frankly miserable where anybody was . .

"Dear God," she murmured, "I'm awfully tired! Do I have to?" reaching for her kimona at the same time, for she knew what His answer would be. With a strangely sweet smile on her lips, she slipped from under the covers, and softly flapped across the floor in her bed-room slippers.

"I'll pretend," she soliloquized, "that Lilly is as beautiful as Cinderella, and that I am distractingly in love with her. That will make it easier to comfort and caress her." (For in her girlish heart she knew that a great deal of comforting was done by physical contact,—the pressure of hands, even if they were red and hard,—the touch upon hair, even if it were orange,—encircling arms, even if, as in this case, her arms wouldn't go all the way 'round.)

As quietly as possible she ensconced herself on the edge of Lilly's bed, with her arms wrapped around her knees, and chin propped upon them. The sobbing ceased, followed at intervals by a few final sniffs.

"Better go back to bed," muttered Lilly hoarsely, in a voice gruffly, yet gratefully tender.

"Not until you go to sleep, dear," responded Joy firmly, reaching out one hand with its strong, square-tipped fingers, to give an affectionate pat to the top of the blanketed mountain occupying the bed.

"But I'm homesick!" wailed Lilly, "and I know I'll flunk everything down here; I'm so dumb!" After a short pause, with a little awe, "You're awful clever; ain't you?"

"They say I am," answered the girl, with a suggestion of that tired wisdom that comes from knowing more than

is proper. "But I'll help you," she added encouragingly.

They talked, disjointedly and disconnectedly, about many things, and Lilly became cheerful enough to remember the box of apples she had brought with her. By the time she had finished munching her second one she was fast asleep, if the queer sounds she made were any indication of her state. Joy smiled a crooked, whimsical little smile, smoothed the covers over the girl, and slipped from her perch on the bed.

She crept to the window, and gazed longingly out into the darkness and storm. There was something in her that cried out for an intimate contact with rain,—that would not be satisfied to stay indoors when it was pouring without. After her elementary study of biology, she had succinctly defined this innate desire of hers, by saying:

"I am like a plant. My cells need moisture as well as sunshine. So when it rains, I must go out-doors and get wet."

When her mother saw her in her bathing suit, one cold, wet evening, skipping in the rain with intense enjoyment, and called out in that sternly maternal voice which only mothers of bright (and incorrigible) children, know how to assume:

"Joyce Carter Randolph! What are you doing?" she received this reply, very pithily expressed in a calm, matter-of-fact tone:

"Watering my cells"

(I put a dotted tail on the above punctuation because, though that is not the end of the story, like Mark Twain, I would rather "draw the curtain of charity over the rest of the scene.")

Joy knelt under the window, breathing deeply the damp, fresh air, and thrilling to the cold soft touch of the raindrops that blew against her face. She listened to the refuge that the rain was playing upon the roof, the street,

the old, ivied wall She felt sure that if she had music-paper, she could very quickly write it down. It would begin in a prancing, dashing major key, then be repeated in a murmuring, poignant minor . . .

"Joyce Carter Randolph! What are you doing? Go to bed this instant" she addressed herself savagely, in exact, but unintentional, mimicry of her mother's voice, as she pulled herself to her feet by main force, or she knew only too well that if she kept on dreaming she would never go to sleep at all, and she had faithfully promised her mother to go to bed when other people did.

She lay quiet for a few moments hearing the sleet, like sharp, icy daggers, hurling itself down against the cold, bare bosom of the earth that so lately had throbbed, warmly and tenderly, with the joy of maternity. There was something so folorn and sad in the sound that involuntarily Joy hugged more closely the pillow she held in her arms, (pretending it was her mother), and buried her face against its feathery breast.

She fell asleep to dream of a huge bear that wept crocodile tears as copiously as rain, while she, in sympathy, solicitiously wiped its streaming eyes with a counterpane. . . .

(To be continued)

The Triumph of Summer

Sad was her tune
As she crept thru the trees,
Sad was her heart
As she echoed the breeze,
For alas, she was leaving —
A forlorn, shivering maid
To wait till another year's work
Had been laid.

Hark ye, the stirring!
A warm breeze awakes,
And a myriad of colors
Seem to come in its wake—
Light is her tune
As she glides thru the trees,
Light is her heart
As she twirls in the breeze.
Happy is Summer,
Her life is redeemed
Young is she now
When old she had seemed—
For Mother Earth gives
To her fond cherished daughter,
A last farewell token—
A gold Indian Summer.

Loulie Milner, '32

Jeanne D'Arr

Listening—through the long years keeping watch—
Our Jeanne—friend and inspiration . . .
To those higher ideals.
She bids us reach out and grasp the things within our
reach
The better to obtain those which are yet remote.

She listens!
Her ear is tuned to just one note—
And while she listens so patiently,
Idle chatter beats upon her ears and hurts them—
For they await the beautiful sound of that one note
Which some day one of us will strike
And through the torch
It will ring throughout the world!

Martha von Schilling, '32

My Song of Life

Life is a song—sing it;
It's a silver chime—ring it!

Life is a poem—say it;
It's a game of football—play it!

Life is a gamble—win it;
It's a gay whirling top—spin it!

Life is a red rose—give it;
It's full of laughter—live it!

Alice Ribble, '31

Reflections on Bryant as a Nature Poet



NATURE, because of its immensity, its grandeur, its beauty, and its religious significance will always be a source of inspiration to the poets of the world. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that one of America's greatest poets, William Cullen Bryant, deals extensively with nature as a moral and aesthetic theme, striving to reflect the spirit of nature as he can conceive it.

To Bryant, our first genuine nature poet, nature and poetry are as one—

“Still came and lingered on my sight
Of flowers and streams the bloom and light,
And glory of the stars and sun
And these and poetry are one.”

Such is the basis of Bryant's loving intimacy with nature. He loves nature for its own sake; he feels a personal affection for each flower and bird. As a poet he sings the praises of the yellow violet, the fringed gentian, the earth, the sky, and the ocean. For to Bryant, in his close communion with nature, she speaks a “various language,”

“To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms she speaks
A various language.”

We may say that Bryant's view of nature is distinctly ethical in character. Nature is a work of God to Bryant and through the realization of its power he recognizes the power of God himself. Bryant believes in the God who made nature, and “in the presence of nature, a master creation, he bows down his soul as one who worships.” In nature he sees the miracle of creation and the promise of eternity. He is awed at the sight—

“My heart is awed within me when

I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on
In silence, round me—the perpetual work
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed forever.
Written on thy words I read
The lesson of thy own eternity.”

Believing nature to be the creation of God, Bryant seeks here the answers to his deepest questionings. In his poem, *To a Waterfowl*, comes the question every human heart seeks to answer—

“Whither midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way.”

In looking to nature for the intact meaning of life itself Bryant considers that he has learnt a lesson, and because of this conception we find him tacking a moral tag on to the end of many of his nature poems. In concluding *To a Waterfowl*, he writes—

“Deeply has sunk the lesson thou has given,
And shall not soon depart.”

A moral appears even in the closing stanza of that lovely little poem which Bryant entitles *To the Fringed Gentian*.

“I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.”

In reading Bryant's poetry we are struck with the fact that one of his favorite themes seems to be death, and its connection with nature. Bryant looks upon nature as the “tomb of man”—

“The venerable woods, rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green and poured round all,
Old ocean's grey and melancholy waste,—

Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man."

Nature carries a most solemn message to Bryant and the final impress gives his nature lyrics a sombre tone.

Bryant is often impressed with the power of nature. He portrays this feeling to us in his *Inscription For the Entrance To a Wood*—

"Enter this wild wood
And view the haunts of Nature. The calm shade
Shall bring a kindred calm; and the sweet breeze
That makes the green leaves dance, shall waft a balm
To thy sick heart."

One of Bryant's favorite themes is the beauty of nature. It inspired him as a vision might—

"Each gaze at the glories of earth, sky, and ocean
To my kindled emotions was wind over flame."

But in worshipping the beauty of nature he hears only the "undertone of beauty"—the solemn beauty that accentuates the grandeur and majesty of nature as a whole. His poem *The Forest Hymn* reflects the solemn idea of beauty that he sensed. Yet in emphasizing a broad conception of the beautiful as a solemn creation of God, Bryant does not hesitate to write of the concrete loveliness found in Nature. He does not fail to praise a lovely flower or stately tree. The following is his quiet offering to the gentle beauty of the fringed gentian—

"Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall."

We find a good deal of sentiment and sensuousness in Bryant's nature by lyrics, especially in his wind poems. On one occasion he says—

"Oh Life! I breathe thee in the breeze."

"Ah! 'twere a lot too blest
Forever in thy colored shades to stray,
Amid the kisses of the soft southwest

And still another illustration of his sentimental dealing with the wind—

To roam and dream for aye."
"The cool wind
That stirs the stream in play, shall come to thee
Like one that loves thee nor will let thee pass
Ungreeted, and shall give its light embrace."

From these several viewpoints has Bryant been characterized as a nature poet. May he be regarded as one who looked upon nature as the work of God, symbolizing in its beauty and grandeur the Master's infinite power. Never does Bryant fail to show in his poetry an awed reverence for nature as the symbol of the spirit. A true nature poet, he expresses a love of the solemn beauty of nature itself coupled with a sentimental longing regarding the personal pleasure it affords him as a constant inspiration and joy.

Bryant caught the spirit of nature as few have ever done since; he will live forever through his beautiful nature lyrics—a master poet—the first true interpreter of nature—God's master creation!

Lillian Bovell, '30

Lover's Leap

(A tragic legend of an Indian Maiden and her lover)

Characters

Big Chief Wacoma

Moonflower, his beautiful daughter

Flying Fox; a young Indian brave, chief suitor for the
hand of Moonflower

Pioneer, a young hunter from the Virginia Colony, another
of Moonflower's admirers

Other braves and warriors of Wacoma's tribe

Act I.—Scene I.

Time—About ten o'clock in the morning.

Setting—On a forested hillside. The pine trees form a partially enclosed semi-circle. The ground is covered with a thick cushion of brown pine needles through which thick richly colored green moss appears in places. There is a large moss-covered rock at the base of one of the pines near the center of the opening.

The Indian maiden and Pioneer come slowly into view. She is a tall, stately girl. She wears a wreath of lady-slippers and dogwood blossoms about her head, while her black, glossy hair hangs in two long braids. Her fringed and beaded dress is partly covered by the brightly colored blanket which is around her shoulders.

Pioneer is large, broad-shouldered, in typical hunter dress—part skins and furs and part the product of civilized handiwork. In his face one may see the marks wrought by continued exposure.

The two seat themselves on the moss-covered rock and begin talking.

Pioneer: Why are you so sad, Moonflower? I do not know you thus.

Moonflower: Today the braves return from the chase. My father has promised my hand to the one who is most successful. I was not told until the going down of yesterday's sun.

Pioneer: Oh, Moonflower! You know that I love you better than does any other. I must have you! Do you not love me still?

Moonflower: Indeed I do. But a dutiful daughter obeys her father's commands.

Pioneer: You shall not sacrifice yourself. Come. Let us go to your father and have him free you of your obligation.

Moonflower: Anthing you may say to him will be useless, but perhaps I can prevail upon him to let me do as I desire in this instance. Yet I fear that such hope is in vain.

(They join hands and leave the enclosure.)

Scene II.

Sitting in Big Chief Wacoma's wigwam. Wacoma is seated upon a thick mat on the floor. He is clothed in a great robe made of the skins of fur-bearing animals, and presents a very dignified appearance. Many councilors and younger warriors are sitting about him. The chief motions for one of the young braves to stand before him.

Wacoma: Flying Fox, you have done your work well and you shall receive your just reward. I have hoped that you might win, and I am truly glad to give my daughter into your care. I am growing old, and I wished not to leave her unprotected.

Flying Fox: My chief, bravest of the brave, I am grateful for your words of commendation, and for the trust you have reposed in me. I shall care for

Moonflower as tenderly as though she were indeed a flower. Thou dost know that she has long been the guiding star of my life.

Wacoma: Well spoken, Flying Fox. (Approving grunts from others.)

(There is a slight commotion at the side entrance and then Moonflower appears.)

Moonflower: Father, may I come in?

Wacoma: Certainly, my child. We have only now been thinking and talking of you.

Moonflower: (Somehow agitated.) I wish to have a few words with you alone.

Wacoma: Very well. All of you may go. (The warriors quietly make their exit.)

Moonflower: Father! Do not compel me to marry Flying Fox. I cannot do it.

Wacoma: What is this? What do you mean? Do you not realize that Flying Fox is bravest of all our warriors and therefore most worthy of you?

Moonflower: But there is another whom I love.

Wacoma: Is he also a brave warrior? If so, perhaps—

Moonflower: He is no warrior, sir, but—

Wacoma: Who, then, is he?

Pioneer: (suddenly entering and taking his stand beside Moonflower) I, sir. I love your daughter, and she professes to return my love. We wish your consent—

Wacoma: (explosively) Never! No child of mine should ever marry a paleface even though she were not already promised to the bravest warrior of her tribe. Begone with you!

Pioneer: Sir, if you'll give me an opportunity—

Wacoma: Not a word from you. Go—this instant! (Exit Pioneer.)

Moonflower: (pleadingly) Father—

Wacoma: It is far the best. My decision is final. I forbid you ever to see that wretch again. Moonflower, I go to give orders for the celebration of your wedding to Flying Fox. (Exit Wacoma who can be heard issuing orders to the squaws and warriors outside).

Moonflower stands dejectedly staring into space. She does not hear Pioneer as he re-enters the room and is startled when he speaks:

Pioneer: Moonflower!

Moonflower: (turning swiftly) Oh, I thought you were gone. But what good is there in your remaining? It is best that you return to your own people. I must do as my father commands. Go—for your life is endangered so long as you remain here.

Pioneer: We must not be separated. It shall not be so. Let us, together, escape by the Single Trail into the beautiful valley beyond the mountain. There we can live happily the rest of our days.

(Unseen to the lovers, Flying Fox is standing just without the door from where he can overhear their conversation.)

Moonflower: What shall I do? Life with Flying Fox will be intolerable while I still love you.

Pioneer: Let us go. We can climb the ridge and make our way down the trail without being seen. Come!

Moonflower: (turning, catches sight of Flying Fox) Oh, the wretch! He has overheard our plans. We must race for our lives.

(Exit Pioneer and Moonflower. While Flying Fox spreads the alarm throughout the tribe. The race for the Single Trail has begun.)

Scene III.

Setting—On the mountain-top. Practically all the surface is of weather-stained rock. The only signs of vegetation are the clumps of mountain laurel and ivy. At one side the approach to the summit is gradual, but on the other side there a sheer drop of hundreds of feet to the valley far below. At first glance we see no possible way of safety reaching the valley, but looking closer, we notice a narrow path which winds about, leading continually downward. This, presumably, is the Single Trail by which Pioneer and Moonflower hope to escape into the outer world.

Flying Fox rushes on the scene. A quick glance assures him that he is ahead of the fleeing lovers. He quickly takes his position at a point on the path several feet below the summit of the natural rock wall and there he stands with drawn bow, waiting—

Moonflower and Pioneer are only a few moments later. As she nears the summit, Moonflower gives a sigh of relief. Moonflower: Safe at last! I feared (her voice breaks as she catches sight of Flying Fox who bars the way to safety and freedom.)

Pioneer: Quickly, Moonflower. Perhaps—

Moonflower: This was our only chance—but I'll not go back. (The remainder of the pursuing warriors approach, but being sure of their prey, they do not press upon them immediately). There is one other way. (She glances over the cliff, almost flinching at the thought.)

Pioneer: Moonflower, I cannot let them take you from me! Our love is undying. It will survive Death. Oh, Moonflower, let us go together.

Moonflower: My Pioneer, forever!

The warriors seem spellbound as they watch this scene.

The lovers lock their arms about each other, and their lips are pressed together as they plunge from the cliff—downward, downward through space, and to their fate. Not one hand is raised to prevent the tragedy, but a moment later, throughout the mountains is echoed and re-echoed the heart-broken cry of Chief Wacoma as he looks down upon the crushed bodies of his daughter and her lover lying on the rocks far below.

—The End—

Martha Anthony, '30

Un--

Some one very wonderful came my way
Giving a glimpse of how fine a life can be.
Scarcely believing its trueness
I was shaken with ecstasy.

There was something in it radiantly lovely
Like the colors in a butterfly's wings—
It held the coolness of star-dust
And the feeling of the dawn.

It showed the paleness of the silver moon
That changed to the blush of the dying sun,
And somewhere was felt the softness of twilight
When day is done.

It suggested the sweetness of lavender
And showed the whiteness of a baby's soul.
I held my breath at the sheer loveliness
At the revealment of a heart's pure gold.

Then the world stepped in between
And the life gained the fame it was due,
But I remained the same—
A dreamer the long years through.

Memory knew my soul ache
And came to live with me.
She painted a picture in my dreams
To last through eternity.

The Light of My Ideal

They flicker before me dreamily
Lights of many a hue;
They hold my gaze, fill my thoughts
And torture my soul anew.
Pale, bright, ghostly gleam
Luring me back to old dreams.

A lane of scarlet calls,
Blinding with its scintillating glare,
I revel in the thrill of it
And follow it everywhere.
Drops from a bleeding ruby oozing,
Crimson lips fuzing.

Laughing eyes and windblown hair,
Eager should follow a flambeau—
A sudden, queer, full consciousness
A softly, turning closing door.
Locked behind daring desire—
Died out the flame of fire.

A golden goddess throws a light,
And finds a victim in me—
Her glistening shafts engulf me
I follow her blindly.
Gold at the end of her trail,
Silver ship ready to sail.

Ah, the avid soul of me
Absorbed in her dazzling gleams!
At last finding the beauty of life
Not in gold or silver dreams.
Tinsel may glisten, dazzle and glitter

And search for wealth may leave a soul embittered.

Tired of the world's ceaseless struggle

Longing for peace once more—

I see before me a different light,

One not tried before.

A white light—

Showing the right.

A white light—clean, clear and strong,

That points to the heights above,

Soft and pure and lovely

Teaching me to live and love

Higher and higher it climbs

Filling my thoughts with a feeling sublime.

Through hard rough roads

It made a path for an aching soul—

And there in the gleam of the silvery stars

At last I found my goal

Soft stars sing to me—

Sing a lilting melody.

Kathleen Woodson, '30

Without You

Oh, I wonder what's the matter
With the sunlight and the air?
Yesterday my spirit soared on wings
And joy was everywhere.
Today the sunlight brings a feeling
That is very near to pain
And the breezes sing a requiem
That is maddening to the brain
Yesterday I held your eyes;
I stroked your hair;
I held in your eyes the beauty of the skies
And heard in your voice, music echoed on the air.
Oh, it may not be the sunlight
And I doubt if it's the air,
But a glorious joy has fled me
And I cannot find it—anywhere.

Mamie Hurt, '31

Silver Maple Leaves

They beckon her with slender fingers,
Veined, and tapered, delicate as lace;
They gently brush her hair and upturned face,
And plead with her to stay. She lingers
Only for a moment, while they clutch
The hand she holds out to them, and
They curl about it in an ecstasy. The girl,
Wearily smiling, draws it from their
Touch, and quietly goes.

Alice St. A. Harrison, '32

To An Erstwhile Lover

I'll give you a kiss for the old times,
A kiss for the mem'ries we share;
One for the clear spring moonlight,
One for the crisp autumn air.

A kiss that will savour of evergreen,
Holly and mistletoe,
A kiss that will bring back memories
Of a Christmas long ago.

Oh, I will give you just one kiss,
And in it will be all
The cloying sweet of love's young dream,
And hatred's bitt'rest gall.

But my one kiss must satisfy—
It's part of the olden times.
It's given because of memories,
And filled with strange, sweet rhymes.

Alice Ribble, '31

Christmas Spirits



T was Christmas eve and old Aunt Mary sat by the fire waiting for Uncle Tom to come in from doing his daily chores. She was just finishing a Sunday shirt for Uncle Tom's Christmas present.

"I sho' does want Tom to come on," she told herself, "Marse Gantt gwine 'spec' him up dah at de big house right soon, an' its pas' suppah time now. Dat you, Tom?" She quickly tucked the shirt out of sight under the bed quilt as the old man came in.

"Mighty cold,, Mary, I's 'fraid it gwine be pow'ful slick up on de hill. 'Spec' I'll hab a hahd time totin' dat Chris'mas tree up dah," commented Uncle Tom as he warmed his hands by the fire.

Aunt Mary took up the beans and bacon from a small black kettle hanging over the fire and removed a smoking hot ash cake from the coals.

"Come on, Tom, an' eat you suppah right quick. Mis' Ginny said she wants you to put up dat runnin' cedah, too. Bettah hurry."

The cabin was a cheery little place. The two old darkies sat side by side eating by candle light assisted by rosy gleams from the open fire. Aunt Mary was short and fat—the "Mammy" type—and very neat. She worked up at her master's house most of the day, as Uncle Tom did, but she never failed to keep the cabin spic and span. On the table was a bright red table cloth and the bed was covered with a quilt of many brilliant colors. The light from the candle and fire was reflected into the room by two small shining windows.

As Uncle Tom rose and put on his coat, Aunt Mary cautioned, "Tom, be cahful an' don' you fall on dat ice. Tell Miss Ginny an' Marse Gantt I says 'Chris'mas gif'!"

Uncle Tom left the cabin picking up the cedar tree

which he had cut earlier in the day. He carefully carried the tree to his master's house and knocked on the kitchen door. Aunt Louisa, the cook, promptly greeted him—

"Wipe dem shoes off clean an' don' you deah let a spec a' dirt get on dese floors. I done seen to it dat dem no count niggahs done got dis house nice an' clean!"

"Is Mis' Ginny put little Mistis Jean to bed yet?" ventured Uncle Tom. "Us can't be lettin' her see Santy Claus."

"Shh!" exclaimed Aunt Louisa.

"Oh, Uncle Tom!" squealed Jean as she danced into the kitchen, "Santy Claus is coming to see me tonight, and I'm going to stay right up and see him! Is he coming to see you, Uncle Tom? I hung up my stocking, too!"

"Law, honey chile, don' you know 'at ole Santy don' come 'till he knows you's in bed? He's gwine peek down dat chimney an' if you still up heah, he'll go 'way an' won't leabe lil' Mistis a thing!"

"O-o-o, Uncle Tom, I'm going to bed right now. Good-night!" And rushing out of the room the child called her mother, "Oh, Mamma, I'm going to bed quick!"

Her mother laughed in reply and called Uncle Tom into the living room to put up the tree.

"Chris'mus gif', Mis' Ginny! Chris'mus gif' Marse Gantt!" cried Uncle Tom.

"All right, Uncle Tom," said Mrs. Blair, "but you wait till we get this tree fixed. Put it over here where Jean will see it as she comes in in the morning. Now, Gantt, dear, you trim the tree while I show Uncle Tom where to put the trailing cedar."

They all worked hard for an hour or so and everything soon looked very "Christmasy." Jean's stocking was overflowing and the gifts were piled high under the tree.

"Tom," said Mr. Blair, "take this bottle of Scotch home with you. Make you feel good on Christmas."

"Thankee, Marse Gantt, thankee! Ummm—sho do' look

good. Bless yo' haht, suh!"

"And here's a basket for you and Aunt Mary, with your Christmas dinner in it and some presents for you both," said Mrs. Blair smiling. "Don't open them until tomorrow!"

"Thankee, Mis' Ginny, you all pow'ful nice to me an' my ole woman an' I sho' do thank you all." He lovingly clasped his bottle as he spoke, then carefully placed it on top of the basket. "Happy Chris'mus, Mis' Ginny an' Marse Gantt."

"Good night and merry Christmas Uncle Tom," they called.

Uncle Tom started picking his way carefully down the hill toward his cabin "Ummm—Marse Gantt sho do' know what'll hit de right spot!"

But the ice on that hill was smooth as glass and treacherously slippery. The old darkie's steps were shaky, although he did his best to walk firmly. He slid once—twice—and then—the inevitable happened! Uncle Tom's foot slipped out from under him and the bottle of Scotch crashed to the ground.

Aunt Mary busy in the cabin heard the noise and hurried to the door just in time to hear Uncle Tom exclaim in a sorrowful voice—"O, Lawd, Chris'mus—come—an'—gone!"

Note: As the basket remained intact, Aunt Mary was happy. Uncle Tom obtained a little more "Christmas spirits" the next morning.

Editor's Easy Chair



S the martial figure of Joan of Arc adorns the cover of this magazine, so must her spirit adorn its pages. Joan's voice must speak to us, and to the world through "*The Voice*". Such is the purpose of our literary magazine—that it may echo our thoughts, our ideals, our activities.

All life is a game of "give and take." College life gives us much that is worthwhile—are we giving something in return? Here is a chance to express your love and faith in those ideals that your College has helped to give you.

"*The Voice*" is our magazine, it should represent a part of each one of us. We must all help to make it a success by making some contribution, no matter how small it may be.

Listen, once many years ago Joan of Arc's voice rang throughout the world. Let us be the ones to make it ring once again!

L. B., '30

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